

Angola Aid Halt Pushed as Senate Meets in Secret

By Martha Angle

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Haunted by the memory of Vietnam, the Senate is debating the issue of U.S. involvement in Angola at an early stage — before America finds itself committed in that strife-torn African country.

As the full Senate began a closed-door debate today over covert U.S. aid in the Angolan civil war, a key Foreign Relations subcommittee yesterday urged an immediate halt to all American aid until such assistance is authorized by Congress.

A bipartisan coalition led by Sen. John V. Tunney, D-Calif., sought to attach a related cutoff amendment to a \$112.3 billion defense appropriations bill scheduled for final Senate action today.

TUNNEY CONCEDED he faced an uphill battle, since most senators have not yet focused on the Angolan issue. But he said the action by the Foreign Relations subcommittee should lend impetus to the effort.

Tunney and his allies were seeking to chop \$33 million from the defense spending bill, evidently in the belief that this figure represents the amount of hidden CIA funds which otherwise would be available for use in Angola.

The liberal coalition also proposed language to prohibit the use of "any other funds appropriated in this act for any activities in Angola other than intelligence-gathering."

The closed-door Senate debate over the Tunney amendment and the underlying issue of U.S. involvement in Angola was an unusual but not unprecedented procedure.

State Department and CIA officials yesterday urged the Foreign Relations subcommittee not to ban the covert U.S. aid that has been funneled to two of the three factions now battling for control of Angola.

A HIGH-ranking U.S. official last week confirmed that the Ford administration had authorized the CIA to supply \$25 million in weapons and funds to these anti-Soviet factions, with another \$25 million to follow later.

The dollar figures contained in the Tunney amendment, however, appear to indicate the total outlay contemplated in Angola is closer to \$60 million than to the previously reported \$50 million.

The assistance is intended to counter the aid provided by the Soviet Union and Cuba to the third faction now fighting in the newly independent country in southwest Africa.

President Ford, speaking through a spokesman, yesterday publicly denounced the Communist intervention in Angola for the first time.

See ANGOLA, A-8

ANGOLA

Continued From A-1

"The President is deeply concerned about the situation in Angola, especially as it relates to actions taken by the Soviet Union and Cuba in providing large quantities of military aid and men to Angola," Deputy Press Secretary William Greener said.

THE FOREIGN assistance subcommittee of the Foreign Relations panel did not ignore the Russian and Cuban involvement in voting 7-0 to demand an immediate end to American involvement in Angola.

At the urging of Sen. Clifford Case, R-N.J., the subcommittee called upon "all countries to terminate any military assistance such countries may be giving to any group, organization, movement or individual in Angola."

In addition, the subcommittee urged Ford to "do his utmost" to seek an end to the hostilities in the former Portuguese colony and the disengagement of all outside parties.

The resolution itself was sponsored by Sen. Dick Clark, D-Iowa, chairman of



SEN. JOHN TUNNEY
Coalition leader

the Foreign Relations subcommittee on Africa.

As a practical matter, the Senate's only realistic chance to force a halt to the flow of U.S. weapons and money into Angola lay with Tunney's effort to bar use of any funds in the big defense appropriations bill for purposes other than intelligence gathering in the African nation.

THE APPROPRIATIONS bill already has cleared both the House and Senate, and a conference report reconciling differences between the two chambers has been adopted by the House.

Nonetheless, there was a long-shot possibility that Senate liberals could force a showdown on the Angola issue and send the bill back to conference for further consideration.

Despite the refusal of the administration to discuss the matter publicly, Tunney said the defense bill contains the 25 million the CIA

still plans to spend in Angola.

The subcommittee's proposal, which will be offered as a joint congressional resolution and as an amendment to a foreign military sales bill still in the early stages of the legislative process, would allow the President to request permission to provide open aid to Angola.

However, the measure would give either the House or the Senate power to veto such assistance any time within 30 days after Ford requested authority to provide the aid.

SEN. FRANK Church, D-Idaho, an early critic of American involvement in Vietnam, said he believes the United States has already gone "too far down the road towards an open-ended commitment to a faction that will lose" in Angola.

Church said it is a mistake to become involved in Angola simply because the Russians have made a move there.

"Any reading of African history makes clear that the Russians won't prevail there for long," he said. "The whole history of the continent is one of a fight against foreign domination, especially by whites," Church said.

Sen. Jacob K. Javits, R-N.Y., said, "If we have any interest in Angola which is worthy of our action through military or economic assistance, we must make it clear how much is involved and why."

Other senators expressed fear that American aid to one faction that is also supported by the white supremacist regime in South Africa could have a devastating effect on U.S. rela-

tions with all of black Africa.

The subcommittee members indicated that CIA officials had conceded that the anti-Soviet factions in Angola "can't possibly win" their struggle in a military sense.

The administration position, according to Sen. Joseph R. Biden Jr., D-Del., "is that we need a stalemate in the military situation that would eventually produce a coalition government."

Case emphasized the importance of the decisions now being reached on the scope of the American intervention in Angola.

"We have pretty much agreed that this is a watershed in American policy in Africa," he said. "We're looking at the matter so carefully just because of that fact."